

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4215

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 0412

USCINCSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PGOV, AR

SUBJECT: FURTHER ON CABINET CHANGES

REF: A) BUENOS AIRES 0342, B) BUENOS AIRES 8477

1. FOREIGN MINISTER QUIJANO. THE APPOINTMENT OF A RESPECTED CAREER OFFICER IN THE MIDST OF NARROWLY POLITICALLY MOTIVATED CABINET SHIFT HAS GIVEN RISE TO CONSIDERABLE SPECULATION. WHAT MOTIVATED IT? OUTGOING MINISTER ARAUZ CASTEX'S ENTOURAGE INSIST THAT QUIJANO IS A VIGNES MAN AND OWES HIS APPOINTMENT TO HIM. ONE MIGHT ARRIVE AT THAT CONCLUSION BY DEDUCTION, BUT EMBASSY BELIEVES IT IS NEVERTHELESS INACCURATE. INDEED, QUIJANO, AT THE TIME, WAS SAID TO BE LEAVING THE OAS BECAUSE HE DIDN'T LIKE WORKING FOR VIGNES AND KNEW VIGNES DIDN'T CARE FOR HIM EITHER. QUIJANO'S CLOSE FRIENDS AT THE MINISTRY, MORE-OVER, VEHEMENTLY DENY THAT VIGNES HAD ANYTHING TO DO WITH HIS APPOINTMENT. HOWEVER IT CAME ABOUT, THESE SAME FRIENDS REPORT THAT QUIJANO IS NOT RPT NOT OVERJOYED. ACCORDING TO THEM, HIS REFERENCES DURING SEARING IN CEREMONIES TO COMPLYING WITH DUTY IN ACCEPTING JOB REFLECT HIS PRIVATELY EXPRESSED CONVICTION THAT AS CAREER OFFICER, AND GIVEN OBVIOUS DISREPAIR INTO WHICH

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ARGENTINE FOREIGN POLICY HAS FALLEN, HE HAD LITTLE CHOICE BUT

TO ACCEPT JOB, EVEN THOUGH IT PROBABLY MEANS HE WILL BE DESTROYED POLITICALLY IN SHORT ORDER. FRIENDS EXPLAINED THAT QUIJANO HAS PRIVATE DOUBTS CONCERNING DURABILITY OF GOVERNMENT AND KEY FIGURES IN IT, NOW INCLUDING HIMSELF.

2. JUSTICE MINISTER. IF REASONS FOR QUIJANO'S APPOINTMENT REMAIN UNCLEAR, MOTIVES BEHIND APPOINTMENT OF JOSE ALBERTO DEHEZA AR COMING INTO SHARPER FOCUS. DEHEZA WAS THE FEDERAL ATTORNEY PRINCIPALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE INVESTIGATION AND REPORT TO JUDGE FASOLINO LAST MONTH WHICH LED LATTER TO DROP CHARGES AGAINST MRS. PERON IN CONNECTION WITH THE FAMOUS CHECK SCANDAL (SEE REF B). MOST OBSERVERS NOW (PROBABLY CORRECTLY) SMELL A PAY-OFF TO DEHEZA--I.E., A WHITEWASH FOR A MINISTRY.

3. DEFENSE MINISTRY. THERE IS STILL NO REPLACEMENT FOR VOTTERO AT THE DEFENSE MINISTRY. ELOY CAMUS' WIDELY BRUITED "LEAK" THAT PABLO REMELLA (A SUPREME COURT JUSTICE AND PROTEGE OF CAMUS') WOULD GET THE JOB NOW APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN LITTLE MORE THAN WISHFUL THINKING ON PART OF CAMUS. RUMORS CONTINUE, MEANWHILE, THAT MRS. PERON AGAIN INTENDS TO SACK THE THREE CINCS. THIS WOULD BE SO HAZARDOUS AND SO COUNTER TO HER INTERESTS THAT IT IS NOT GENERALLY CREDITED. HOWEVER, MRS. PERON HAS ACTED ILLOGICALLY BEFORE...

4. NEW CHANGES? RUMORS THAT CAFIERO AND RUCKAUF WOULD ALSO BE OUSTED HAVE BEEN SPIKED, AT LEAST FOR THE TIME BEING, BY LORENZO MIGUEL'S STATEMENT THAT MRS. PERON HAS ASSURED HIM THERE WOULD BE NO FURTHER CABINET CHANGES AT THIS TIME (SEE SEPTTEL). "AT THIS TIME, HOWEVER, MAY REFER ONLY TO TODAY AND TOMORROW.
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